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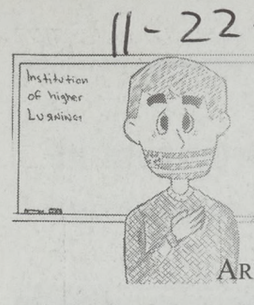

OPINION PG. 2
UNDER GOD?
THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE IS UNDER FIRE AGAIN. ARE PEOPLE GOING TOO FAR?

VALLEY LIFE PG. 4
MUSIC AND MOVIES
CHILD LABOR FILM ON CAMPUS AND THE GAME'S "DOCTOR'S ADVOCATE"

SPORTS ONLINE
BASKETBALL
MONARCHS LOSE FIRST PRESEASON GAME TO PALOMAR.

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VALLEY STAR

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

VOLUME 65, ISSUE NO. 8 | NOVEMBER 22, 2006 | IT'S *YOUR* NEWSPAPER

Great Grades Honored

BY KHARA HUBERMAN
STAFF WRITER

Students at Valley College who earned a high grade point average for the Fall 2005 semester were honored Nov. 16 at the Dean's Reception in Monarch Hall. Six hundred fourteen full-time and 1,383 part-time students were honored for their academic excellence.

In order to receive recognition for official transcripts, full-time students must earn a 3.5 GPA and complete 12 or more graded units. On the other side of the coin, part-time students must earn a 3.5 and complete six to 11 graded units.

"It feels great to have your [hard] work recognized," said full-time Valley student Dina Ovsepian, a communication and journalism major.

Ovsepian, who earned a 3.9 GPA and plans on transferring to USC said, "Put in your time, even if [a class] seems easy, just put in your time, better safe then sorry."

Although President Tyree Wieder could not make it to the event, Vice President of Academic Affairs Yasmin Delahoussaye spoke on her behalf saying, "If you can dream it, believe it.'

"It feels good," said Vahe Abolian, a communication and psychology major who earned a 3.7 GPA and was thrilled to be honored. "It's like a pay-off going to school. It's like you finally get something out of it," he said.

Monarch hall was filled with honoree's families, friends, and supporters who enjoyed the reception and food provided. The event was sponsored by ASU, hosted by Tau Alpha Epsilon.

"I feel that students' hard work should be rewarded and this kind of reception is really good for students to [get] encouraged [and] dedicate their time to their classes," said TAE President Ann Maguire who went on to give advice to students, saying there are so many resources students don't know about but if students research resources available to them they can succeed in academic excellence.

SWEET SOUNDS

DANIEL KANE /VALLEY STAR

STRIKING A CHORD - Last Sunday the LAVC Philharmonic Choir and Ochestra, led by conductor Dr. Michael H. Arshagouni, preformed the Coronation Anthem No. 1 "Zadok the Priest" by Handel to start the evening. Part of the Fall 2006 Concert Series, the event included pieces by Haydn, Eybler and Mozart.

Feeding Families at Valley

BY ELEARY S. NIXON
STAFF WRITER

Valley College's Pre-Medical Engineering Science Scholars Association (P.E.S.S.A.) is doing its part this holiday season to feed hungry families in Los Angeles.

On Wednesday Nov. 15, P.E.S.S.A. held a one-day "kick-off party" in Monarch Square with the help of radio station Power 106. The event marked the beginning of the club's month long push to gather donations in support of the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank in its "Feed a Family" drive.

"We are doing our part in helping families in need," said P.E.S.S.A. President Lisa Foltz. "[So far] things are going very well."

This is the club's first food drive and its goal is to get as many cash donations, canned goods, personal products, packaged items and more to the food bank to help out the families who are doing without this holiday season.

The desire to help bless the hungry is a collaborative effort and any participation would be much appreciated, Foltz said. For every single dollar donated, the food bank can provide seven meals. With a $10 donation, an entire family can be fed, which incentivises donators to give more.

Radio station Power 106 came aboard to promote the food and fund drive by providing music and prizes. "My friend is a Coordinator for Power 106, and did [P.E.S.S.A.] a favor by supporting the event," said club member Alina Saroukhanian. "[Power 106] said it was a cause worth helping."

The festivities did not end with the good music since Power generously held raffles, offering tickets for the Los Angeles Kings hockey team, AMC movie theatres, Magic Mountain and $25 iTunes cards.

The mood-setting music wouldn't have been complete without food. P.E.S.S.A. had a booth selling spaghetti, salad and soda, proceeds from which will be going to the food bank.

"We need as many donations as people can give," said event organizer Leah Bassoni. "Currently, we have a couple hundred pounds of food already donated."

The four-hour kick-off event was successful in filling up many of the donation bins and approximately 80 meals were sold. P.E.S.S.A. will have bins available until Dec. 15 at Valley. To donate on campus, the food bank bins can be found in the Life Science, Math, Chemistry, Foreign Language, and Campus Center buildings as well as outside the ASU offices.

To donate online, visit LAFoodBank.com where cash donations can be made. The site also has a virtual grocery store where food products can be purchased.

Students Design to Save Bunnies

BY BRAD TAYLOR
SPECIAL TO THE VALLEY STAR

Valley College students Jason Ponggasam and Patty Variboa were recently engaged, started a business and have a Babee.

In fact, it was Babee, the couple's fluffy white rabbit, which served as the inspiration for Fat Rabbit Farm, a multiplying T-shirt design company the couple started three months ago with $5,000.

"We just let our imaginations run loose," said the 23-year-old Ponggasam.

Fat Rabbit Farm boats colorful shirts adorned with animated animals and characters in bizarre situations. A mix of anime inspiration and barnyard basics run amok on the six shirt designs. "Huey," their best selling design, features a man-hungry mushroom, and the couple is working on a "Ninja Bunny" T-shirt in which a rabbit is chopping his dinner (a carrot) with a sword.

Variboa, 22, and Ponggasam have taken a grassroots approach to their business, selling their designs at local street fairs, anime expos and online. Ponggasam recently quit his job at Ikea to concentrate on his budding bunny business. Variboa still works part time, but spends a lot of time working with her fiancé on Fat Rabbit Farm.

"We pour our hearts and souls into the business," Variboa said.

Fat Rabbit Farm sells its T-shirts for $17 and the couple is offering a special holiday rate of $13.

They also put their hearts in the right place, especially when it comes to giving back to their inspirations. Fat Rabbit Farms donates 15 percent of their revenue to the Bunny Bunch, an animal rescue center in Southern California, which helps find safe and loving homes for homeless rabbits. The pair is working to help the Bunny Bunch reach their $300,000 goal to build a new facility.

Variboa and Ponggasam plan to expand their business and design company, Creative-Pear, into a clothing line beyond T-shirts, and hope to open their own store eventually. The couple said they are headed to Sacramento in January to sell their shirts at the Sac-Anine Expo. For more information, you can visit their online store at www. FatRabbitFarm.com.

ALEX FAYVIL / VALLEY STAR

RABBIT CRUSADE - Jason Ponggasam and Patty Variboa have put their design skills to good use, making fun shirts and helping bunnies on the way.

Media Arts Instructor Juggles School and Film

BY MARTIN RUIZ
STAFF WRITER

Media Arts instructor and independent film producer, Alan Sacks has been on an unusual but fascinating journey worthy of an "E True Hollywood Story."

After graduating from Brooklyn College with a master's degree in television and going to graduate school for broadcasting, Sacks came out to the 'left coast,' as he calls it, in 1969.

"My choice was either to go to Woodstock or drive cross-country," said the practicing Buddhist. "So I put a bandana around my head and came out here like easy rider."

Sacks created hit T.V. show "Welcome Back, Kotter" with a friend in the '70s, making John Travolta a star and is currently in development on a feature-length project under the same title for an Ice Cube film set in South Central.

Sacks calls it "truly a blessing" to teach at Valley College. "My students inspire me totally. They keep me fresh, they keep me hip." When asked what brought him to teaching, he explained, "I always liked the academic life. When I was in college, I loved being on campus, I loved being around young people."

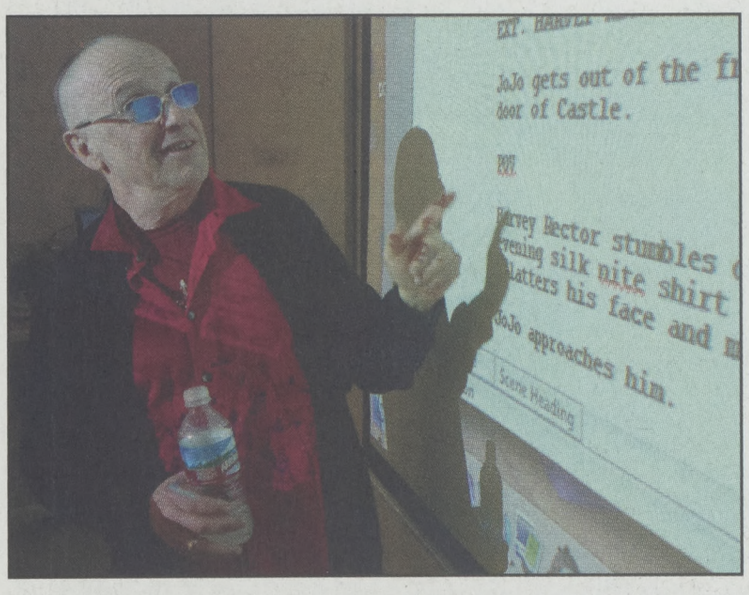
His students like his easy-going and unique personality. "He's really laid back, he doesn't have a very difficult personality," said Chris Rivera, a student in his screenwriting class. "He's kind of a strange bird, but he's a really cool instructor."

"I think he's a character," added Randi Besse, another student in his screenwriting class. "He reminds me of Horshack," referring to the oddball character in "Welcome Back, Kotter." Many of the characters and situations in that show were based on Sacks' own classmates and school experiences.

His love for youth has extended to the projects he works on, many of which are Disney movies. In fact, as executive producer he won an Emmy and NAACP Image award for the Disney movie "The Color of Friendship" released in 2000, about a white South African girl who must overcome racism when she's sent to live with the family of a black U.S. Senator.

In addition to teaching, Sacks is often working on numerous

see '*Sacks*' page 3



DANIEL KANE/VALLEY STAR

FUNNY MAN - Professor Alan Sacks' visionary style can be found on-screen and in the classroom at Valley College.

STARS Shines on Campus

BY JESSICA SHAFFER
STAFF WRITER

The Strategic Team for the Advancement and Retention of Students, or STARS, connects people from all over Valley College and provides a forum for them to come together and discuss the learning process.

The STARS program provides workshops centered on learning and how students and teachers can create an environment conducive to learning in the classroom. These workshops are available to any student, faculty or staff member on campus.

"I thought [STARS] was really groundbreaking because I had the opportunity to sit with more than one professor... and I was able to sit with them the way they would sit with another faculty member," said Nicole Valdez, a student who graduated from Valley in 2005. "It was very equalizing."

STARS also gives out scholarships every year that are solely based on how many events a student attends and is run by a steering committee made up of faculty members from different departments and a student liaison.

The program was created in 2003 when former Program Director Deborah Herrington received a three-year FIPSE, or Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education, grant from the U.S. Department of Education. FIPSE gives grants to colleges and universities for programs that seek to improve education.

"The FIPSE grants are really hard to get," said Co-director of STARS and Tutor Coordinator of the Writing Center Scott Wiegand. "They're very prestigious when schools do get them, especially for community colleges... The idea behind the grant is that students need to have the opportunity to share the responsibility in terms of defining the direction their learning takes."

Though the grant ended

see '*STARS*' page 3

OPINION

■ Make your voice heard! Participate in the online poll at *www.lavalleystar.com*

AN OPINION

Media Push 2008 Prez Campaign Before Dust Settles on 2006 Elections

BY KRISTEN BECKER
STAFF WRITER

Major American newspapers and news organizations declared Nov. 8, 2006 – the day after the last election – to be the start of the 2008 presidential campaign season.

Before the results were even in, all the cable news channels were talking about 2008. Despite the fact that the new session of Congress has not even started, political pundits are already talking about the effect Democratic control of the House and Senate will have on the presidential elections. In the days after the 2004 election, news organizations had the same mentality; election officials had not even finished counting the votes and people were already speculating about what would happen four years in the future.

"I think the American people are entitled to a little time off. Don't you think?" former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani said in response to a question about his intentions for the next election.

Considering how bitter the political environment has become in the past few years, the public needs a break from the constant campaigning. Maybe if there was less of a focus on getting reelected and more of a focus on actually governing, politicians would actually get some work done.

The first of the primaries is more than a year away and so far only two politicians, Tom Vilsack, the former governor of Iowa, and Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., have officially declared their candidacy for president. Although both Giuliani and Arizona Sen. John McCain have formed exploratory committees to test the feasibility of a run for the White House, none of the so-called front-runners has made any official announcements.

All elections are extremely important and presidential races are even more so because they determine who runs this nation and what foreign and domestic policies are enacted, but the American public needs some time to breathe. Isn't there other news that is more important than what may or may not happen in two years?

While politicians do need to begin planning early for a campaign as tough as the one that determines who will occupy the Oval Office, the American media would do better to focus on what is actually happening in the world. Speculation this early and without any real facts is not news.

AN OPINION

The Pledge of Allegiance is Supposed to Unite, Not Divide

BY TONY SILVA
STAFF WRITER

The Pledge of Allegiance has recently been under scrutiny for its use of the words "under God," and many people think the pledge should be banned from public schools, colleges and universities because of those two words. Some schools have already taken action, such as Orange Coast College here in Southern California, where some student leaders have touched off a furor by banning the Pledge at their meetings, saying they see no reason to publicly swear loyalty to God and the U.S. government.

These acts have left many to wonder whether the Pledge of Allegiance is influenced more by politics than patriotism. Isn't the act of banning people from saying something actually oppressing freedom of speech, a right that is guaranteed even by the 1st Amendment?

The original pledge was written in 1892 – more than 100 years ago – by Baptist minister and educator Francis Bellamy, who made no reference to religion. It wasn't until 1954 when Congress added the words "under God," after dealing with pressures from the Knights of Columbus and other groups.

As far as we know, Bellamy's intention was to have something that unites everyone. Whether we believe in one God or in different gods, it is something that can bring us together as a nation. It is acts such as those from schools like Orange Coast College that causes that unity in this country to dissolve as time progresses.

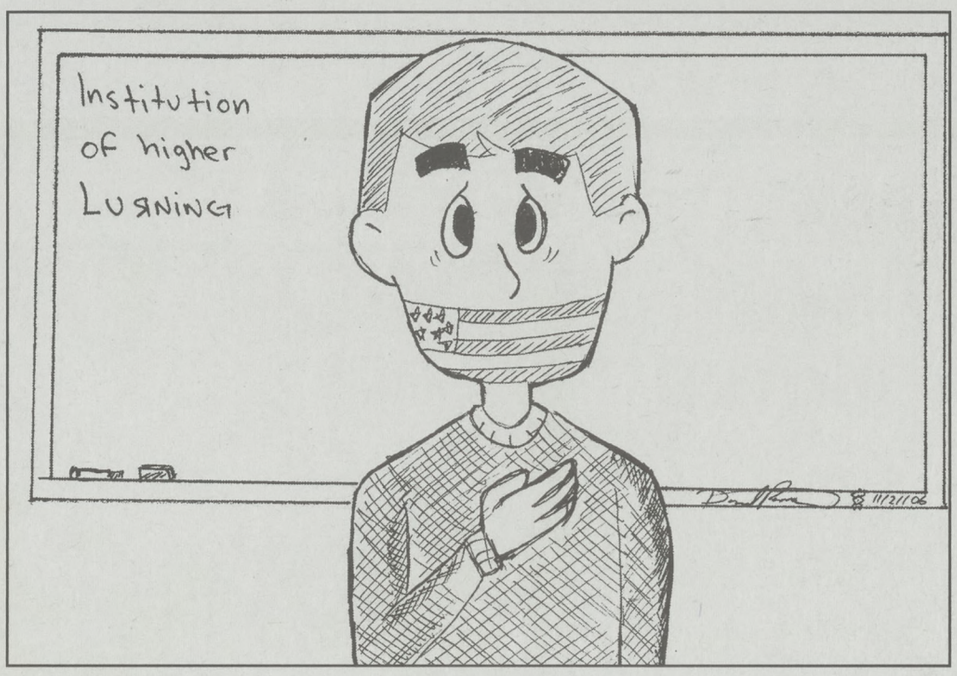


ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL PARRA / VALLEY STAR

The U.S. government, in fact, doesn't demand or even ask that citizens pledge allegiance, and it certainly doesn't ban them from expressing or practicing their religious or political beliefs. And in many ways, the pledge of allegiance reminds us that we are in a country that has given us freedom to speak and to pursue our own religious – or non-religious – beliefs.

If an individual does not want to recite the pledge because of the words "under God," then omit that phrase. If an individual does not want to recite the pledge at all, then don't. That's the great thing about America: it's liberty (and justice for all).

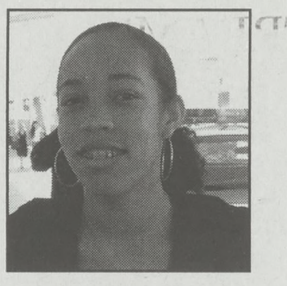
Campus View

Do you think the Pledge of Allegiance should contain the phrase "under God"?

PHOTOS BY DANIEL KANE / TEXT BY WILL REYES

"No, because government and religion shouldn't mix."

Imelda Sanchez
Math

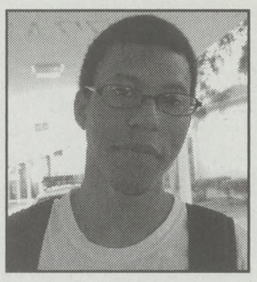


"Yes, because this country was based on [Christianity]."

Rachel Ibrahim
Undecided

"Yes, I'm very religious. I believe God created the world and every thing should be under God."

Laura Velasquez
English



"No, because not every body believes in one god."

Kelvin Mckay-Hill
Commercial Music

AN OPINION

Valley Vandals Cost Campus

■ Despite the administration's efforts to fix up the campus, vandals continue to deface Valley property.

BY JESSICA SHAFFER
STAFF WRITER

Out of all the crimes a person can commit, what is the one that will give them that "hardcore" reputation? It seems many people think scribbling on the walls will do just that.

Believe it or not some people must actually think that vandalism is cool, otherwise why is Valley College spending more than $40,000 each year to clean up the names of gangs, taggers and more that are written on desks, carved into bathroom stalls and spray-painted on storage facilities.

I cannot think of a more pointless crime. These people are not making any money, nobody was injured, and the college will just erase any work of art or pearl of wisdom that might appear in the graffiti.

Are students really that bored that they just want to sit in the back of the classroom and doodle on the tables or in the school bathrooms? If this is the case, then these students are seriously missing the point of getting a college education.

And many of the messages are actually carved. Imagine how much time it would take a person to carve something into a solid-wood desk.

At least writing can be erased or repainted, but when thing are carved into an object, usually the only thing Valley can do to make it look nice again is to replace the whole thing.

Vandalism occurs on other school property also. The other day I saw that someone had written, "The King" on a computer monitor in the math science building. I thought computers are to type with, not write on.

The saddest part is that these people are college students and they should know better. College students have to pay to attend college so one might assume they would take better care of the facilities. Although students from Grant High School and local gangs do some of the vandalism, I doubt Valley students are completely blameless.

"We're investing all these millions of dollars into these facilities to renovate them and make Valley College look like a world-class college," said Director of College Facilities Tom Lopez in an interview with the Valley Star. "But it's going down the tube because we've got some people that don't respect [other] people's property at all."

Writing on school property is not a game or a joke, it's a crime and a drain on Valley's already strained resources. Valley has been in a budget crisis for years and a lot of the money coming into the college is wasted on cleaning up vandalism. That money could be used to upgrade some of the facilities around campus.

These criminals are not just costing the college but themselves and all of the other students as well by making the college spend the money that could go toward upgrading the college and giving students a better education instead goes toward cleaning up vandalism.

For more stories, photos and letters to the editor, visit the Valley Star online at

www.lavalleystar.com

AN OPINION

Michael Richards Racist Remarks Inexcusable, Apology Shallow

■ "Seinfeld's" Kramer angered many people with his irresponsible and disrespectful comments at a comedy gig Friday in Hollywood.

BY WILL REYES
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Actor and Comedian Michael Richards, best known for his role as "Cosmo Kramer" on Jerry Seinfeld's popular "Seinfeld" sitcom exploded last Friday into a disgusting anti-black tirade.

While performing at the famous Laugh Factory comedy club in West Hollywood, Richards, a Valley College alumni, began hurling racial epithets at a heckler. For two minutes, he provoked and insulted the audience member in an extremely inappropriate manner.

"Fifty years ago we'd have you upside down with a f***ing fork up your ass," ranted Richards. He proceeded to repeatedly hurl the N-word at several black people in the audience, presumably part of the group that had heckled him.

Even if his words were meant to only anger the hecklers, Richard's comments and actions were seriously offensive and unacceptable. It's sad to think that such a well-known person would harbor feelings of such a racist nature.

"What makes Richards' comments so wrong is both the extent to which he took it and the rage behind his words."

It's a common practice for hecklers or audience members to be ridiculed in any comedy performance. What makes Richards' comments so wrong is both the extent to which he took it and the rage behind his words. No amount of apologies or context can be applied to justify something as wrong as what he did.

The rant caused a number of people in attendance to get up and start leaving in disbelief. The most disturbing parts of the entire incident were not only the conviction evident in his voice when he said the slurs, but his arrogant explanation of "Well, you interrupted me pal" when a crowd member told him it was all uncalled for.

"I'm not a racist, that's what's so insane about this," Richards said in a nationally televised apology on "The Late Night Show with David Letterman."

If he doesn't consider his actions as those indicative of a racist, then we should all be worried about what a "racist" really is.

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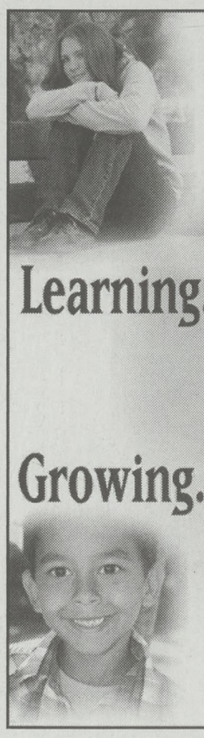

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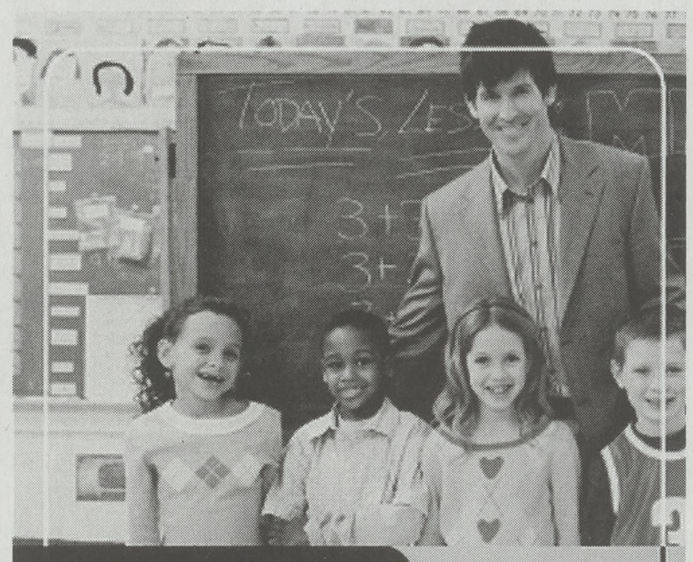
'STARS'

continued from page 1

during summer 2006, the program is currently undergoing the process of institutionalization to make it a permanent feature at Valley College.

STARS also puts Valley ahead of the curve because the Los Angeles Community College Board of Trustees passed an initiative on May 10 this year that mandates the community colleges in the district to create programs for student success.

"Scott and I have been going to the LA Community College District Meetings for student success because our steering committee... is a student success committee," said Co Director of STARS and Department Chair of Sociology Sally Raskoff. "STARS is the model they are using to facilitate all these other committees on all the other... campuses."



teaching tip • 9 Superheroes don't always wear capes.

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'Sacks'

continued from page 1

film projects simultaneously. He says that juggling everything is all about time management and problem-solving.

Sacks brings projects he's working on into class to show students the process of filmmaking as he's living it. His advice for students seeking to break into the entertainment industry is patience, hard work, and learning as much as possible.

"Get as much knowledge as you can in every kind of class you can take," he says. "If someone wants to become a writer, it's good to know editing; and if they want to be an editor, they should know how to write. Know the history of television, the history of film."

Broadcasting instructor, Gail Nastasia, says Sacks is great to work with because he's knowledgeable and a people person. "Like any great producer, he gets along with everyone," she said.

The chair of the department, Eric Swelstad, agrees: "He's approachable, friendly and passionate about his projects, which students love." Swelstad says that Sacks has a dedicated following at Valley and adds, "He's got a lot of real world experience to share with students."

Summing up his motivation in what he wants to teach his students, Sacks ties it in with his Buddhist principles of living honestly and not speaking harshly: "I want [students] to come away with something that can help them on their journey of trying to become professionals in the entertainment industry. To me, that's spiritual."

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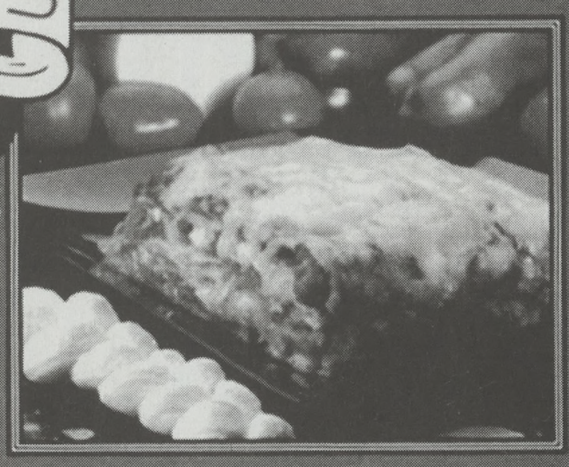

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Wednesday, Nov. 22

Rolling Stones @ Dodger Stadium, 1000 Elysian Park Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90012; 7 p.m. $60-450

Thursday, Nov. 23

Volunteer on Thanksgiving @ Union Station Foundation, 825 E. Orange Grove Boulevard, Pasadena 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 24

Dixie Chicks w/ Pete Yorn @ STAPLES Center, Hollywood; 1111 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles, CA 90015; 8 p.m. $50 - 80

Saturday, Nov. 25

The Elected @ Troubadour, 9081 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069; 8 p.m. $15

Sunday, Nov. 26

Disney Presents the Lion King @ Pantages Theatre, 6233 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90028; 1 p.m. $17.50 - 84.50

Monday, Nov. 27

Cannibal Corpse @ House of Blues, 8430 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90069; 7 p.m. $22

Tuesday, Nov. 28

Alice In Chains with Hurt @ The Wiltern LG, 3790 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90010; 9 p.m. $39.50

Think Transfer!

Wednesday, November 22
College application workshop
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 28
UC San Diego Rep
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
CSU Northridge Rep 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 5 - 7 p.m.
College Application Workshop
1 - 2 p.m.
UC Financial Aid Rep
1:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 29
College Application Help
9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Thursday, November 30
FALL 2007 UC TRANSFER APPLICATION DEADLINE AND CSU TRANSFER APPLICATION PRIORITY DEADLINE - Apply at www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions or www.csumentor.edu
College Application Help 9-7

Monday, December 4
Undecided Major/Career Workshop 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, December 5
University of Southern California application Workshop
1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 6
University of Phoenix Rep
10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Monarch Square

All events held in Career/ Transfer Center (admin. 126) unless otherwise noted. Call (818) 947-2646 for further information.

Film Series Addresses Child Labor Problem

■ Students can make a difference by spreading the word.

BY MARTIN RUIZ
STAFF WRITER

Most Americans only become aware of the horrors of child labor when a major sweatshop scandal breaks out, but for more than 246 million impoverished children worldwide, it's a daily reality that robs them of an education, their childhood and future.

As part of Valley College's Fall Film Series, associate professor of Child Development Elmida Baghdaserians, along with her colleagues in the Sociology and Foreign Language departments, presented "Stolen Childhoods" this past Thursday. The feature-length documentary provided a glimpse into the brutal lives of children forced to work for meager wages to support themselves and their families.

Music major Keiko Brady, who saw the movie for her sociology class, said she felt depressed and guilty after watching it. "I sort of knew these kinds of things are going on in the world," she said. "As a person who lives in a rich country, we forget about and ignore these kinds of bad things."

The film detailed the plight of children in various parts of the world who are "beaten, abused and forced against their will to become cogs in the global economy," according to the movie; kids in Kenya picking coffee beans, Indian children slaving away in a quarry, pre-pubescent girls sold into prostitution in Mexico City.

These children generally make less than a dollar a day for their toil, yet the products they manufacture are marked up as much as 4,000 percent. "The major corporations get away with it when we buy products that support child labor," said Baghdaserians. "It's really scary because many of us visit Starbucks [which practices unfair labor], but how much do we really know about these places? We need to start being more aware."

In America, 18 percent of children live in poverty ...

Child labor isn't just a problem in third-world countries. In America, 18 percent of children live in poverty, according to the Stolen Childhoods Website. "When we think of child labor, we generally think about it in other countries," Baghdaserians said. "But it happens right here in the United States."

Joseph Galang, a child psychology major who saw the movie, knows the tragedy these kids suffer first-hand.

"We need to care a lot more about children, we need to change the lifestyle of these kids," said Galang, who was brought here from the Philippines by his father as a child. Like the kids in the movie, he used to take drugs and sniff glue to alleviate his hunger.

"It's important to be more vigilant. These kids are being used like tools – they're being manufactured. [They] deserve a life like we do, they need to go to college and have a chance at life."

Although Galang said he enjoyed the film, he pointed out that there's a lot more behind the abuse than what was shown. "It's just a minor glimpse of what these kids are doing, there's more behind the picture."

As for what we can do to make a difference, Baghdaserians advises that students spread the word. "It's a very important issue and most of us don't do anything about it because we don't know what to do," she said about the child labor epidemic.

The Film Series continues Thursday, Dec. 7 at 1 p.m. in the Behavioral Science Building, room 101 with "The Devil's Miner." For more information on what you can do to fight child labor, visit www.stolenchildhoods.org.

The Game is The "Doctor's Advocate"

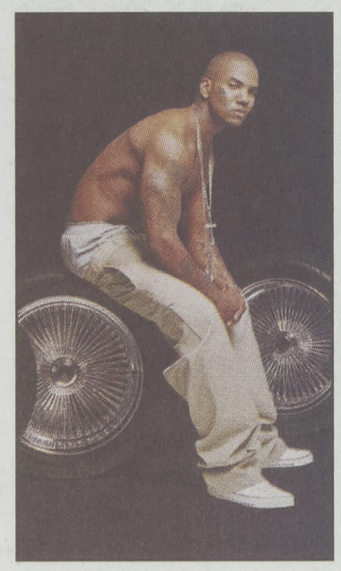
The Game
"Doctor's Advocate"
Geffen Records

★★★★ out of 5

BY ELEARY S. NIXON
STAFF WRITER

The Game, a.k.a. Jayceon Taylor, has left the Dr. Dre-induced beats behind and manages to score a victory with his second LP, "Doctor's Advocate."

Former gang member The Game is back with a West Coast beat driven and lyrical homage to everything that represents 'Cali' emceeing. "Doctor's Advocate" will surely provide The Game with credibility as a rapper after the fall-out with former label-mate 50 Cent.



COURTESY OF GEFFEN RECORDS

"Doctor's Advocate" stays true to hood-rap, providing rap fans with gritty lyrics that designate The Game as an incomparable rap force. The break-out song "It's Okay/One Blood" provides a great beat created by The Game with an unsurprising ode to N.W.A.'s front-man Eazy-E, *"Word to Eazy I'm so ill believe me/...I'm the king, Dre said it the West Coast needs me."*

Other songs on the album, such as "California Vacation" and "Why You Hate The Game," offer great lyrics but tend to use too much synthesizer, which takes away from those lyrics.

While his first album had half its songs produced by beat-god Dr. Dre and some tracks co-written by 50 Cent, "Doctor's Advocate" does not have any help from the two.

The Game has set a new path with new producers such as Scott Storch, Just Blaze, Kanye West, Swizz Beatz and Jelly Roll.

As an added bonus, The Game has major collaborations with artists such as Nate Dogg, Snoop Dogg, Xzibit, Busta Rhymes and Will.i.Am.

The Game's first album, the critically acclaimed 2005 record "The Documentary," spawned double-platinum status with help from Dr. Dre, 50 Cent and Eminen.

However, that joyride came to an abrupt halt after he refused to join in on 50 Cent's "dis rampage" on other emcees.

Soon after, The Game was left having to defend his rap credibility while being ousted from the 50 Cent clique and the Aftermath record label headed by Dr. Dre.

As 2006 ends, The Game is set to resume his position in the frail arena of rap music. "Doctor's Advocate" lacks everything that his first album "The Documentary" overflowed with, but still provides complete evidence of rap-worthiness.

Critics may be skeptical of the success that "The Doctor's Advocate" can muster with the absence of Dr. Dre and 50 Cent. Yet, The Game has his eyes set on platinum sales and has stopped looking out the small rearview mirror and focused on looking through the wide windshield into his future.

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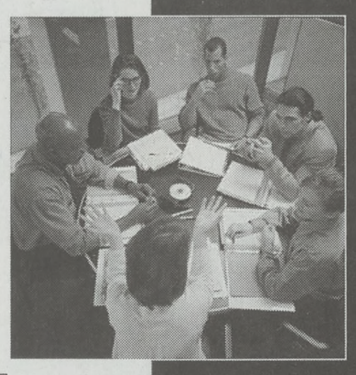

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